UNITED NATIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS

FORTIETH YEAR

2582nd MEETING: 31 MAY 1985

NEW YORK

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NOTE

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2582nd MEETING

Held in New York on Friday, 31 May 1985, at 6 p.m.

President: Mr. Birabhongse KASEMSRI (Thailand).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Australia, Burkina Faso, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, India, Madagascar, Peru, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2582)

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. The situation in the Middle East:
   Letter dated 30 May 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/17228)

The meeting was called to order at 6.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East:
Letter dated 30 May 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/17228)

1. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Lebanon and Malta, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Fakhoury (Lebanon) and Mr. Gauci (Malta) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

2. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received a letter dated 31 May from the representative of Egypt [*S/17234*], which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request the Security Council to extend an invitation to the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in the deliberations of the Council on the item entitled 'The situation in the Middle East', in accordance with the Council's usual practice."

3. The proposal by Egypt is not made pursuant to rule 37 or rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure, but, if approved by the Council, the invitation to participate in the debate would confer on the Palestine Liberation Organization the same rights of participation as those conferred on Member States pursuant to rule 37. Does any member of the Council wish to speak on this proposal?

4. Mr. SORZANO (United States of America): The United States opposes extending to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) the same rights to participate in the proceedings of the Security Council as if that organization represented a Member State of the United Nations. We have consistently taken the position that, under the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, the only legal basis on which the Council may grant a hearing to persons speaking on behalf of non-governmental entities is rule 39. For 35 years the United States has supported a generous interpretation of rule 39, and would certainly not object in this case. We are, however, opposed to special *ad hoc* departures from orderly procedure.

5. When the time comes, we shall vote in favour of the draft resolution before us, and we certainly believe in listening to all points of view. But none of that requires violating the rules. In particular, the United States does not agree with the recent practice of the Council, which appears selectively to try to enhance the prestige of those who wish to speak in the Council through a departure from the rules of procedure. We consider this special practice to be without legal foundation and to constitute an abuse of the rules. For those reasons, the United States requests that you, Mr. President, put the terms of the proposed invitation to the vote. Of course, the United States will vote against the proposal.

6. The PRESIDENT: If no other member of the Council wishes to speak at this stage, I shall take it that the Council is ready to vote on the proposal by Egypt.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Burkina Faso, China, Egypt, India, Madagascar, Peru, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Denmark, France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The proposal was adopted by 10 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

7. The PRESIDENT: The Council is meeting today in response to the request contained in a letter dated 30 May from the representative of Egypt to the President of the Council [*S/17228*].

8. Members of the Council have before them document S/17232, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's consultations. It is my understanding that members of the Council are ready to vote on the draft resolution. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put it to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously [resolution 564 (1985)].

9. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): With a heavy heart, the delegation of Egypt speaks today out of feelings of brotherhood and solidarity. We must put an end to the bloodshed, put the worst behind us, and look ahead to a future of peace and tolerance.

10. The Government and people of Egypt have followed with deep concern the bloody events in fraternal Lebanon and the bloody conflict in and around Beirut between our brothers, the Palestinians and the Lebanese. Egypt reaffirms in the strongest terms its support for the sovereignty and unity of Lebanon and its full support for the national objectives of the Palestinian people.

11. Egypt's course has always been based on a position of historical and national responsibility and a deep belief in the unity and destiny of all the Arab peoples, including the Palestinians, as they engage together on the historical path towards a better future in which international legitimacy and justice will prevail.

12. The delegation of Egypt speaks today with a heavy heart about the war between brothers who until recently had stood in one line, fighting together in defence of Lebanon.

13. On 24 May [*S/17215*], the members of the Council, through you, Mr. President, expressed their serious concern at the heightened violence in certain parts of Lebanon during the preceding days and reaffirmed and supported the call made by the Secretary-General on 22 May to the Lebanese Government and to all parties concerned to make every possible effort to put an end to the violence. The Secretary-General, in that call, not only expressed his deep concern at the increase in the hostilities, which had led to heavy casualties on all sides, but also referred particularly to the destruction befalling the camps of the Palestinian refugees. As stated by the Secretary-General on 12 April this year, the United Nations bears a clear historical responsibility for the safety and welfare of the Palestinian refugees. All of us today must measure up to that responsibility.

14. It is well known that, despite all these calls and despite all these clear-cut positions, the blood of innocent Palestinians and Lebanese continues to be shed inside and around the Palestinian camps. Our only possible course today is to be unanimous and thereby strengthen the will of the international community to put an end to this tragedy and to stop the bloodbath in Lebanon. That well-established unanimity has been expressed today in the Council.

15. The subject before us now can be summed up in this way: the need to look for practical means, in accordance with the mandate of the Council, to ensure the protection, security, tranquillity and welfare of the Palestinian people, in the context of the full, unprejudiced, undiminished sovereignty of Lebanon—and Egypt is the first to respect and defend that sovereignty and to stand against any attempt to undermine it under any pretext.

16. The suffering being endured by the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon now not only causes deep concern but requires that we seek in all seriousness the ways and means to provide protection and security for them, in accordance with resolutions adopted by the Council in similar circumstances.

17. This formal meeting of the Council today and the unanimous adoption of the resolution before it are clear-cut evidence, in our view, that the Council has measured up to its responsibility. The resolution also takes into account the co-operation of the Lebanese Government and the need to give it effective assistance in order that a cease-fire may be attained immediately and that all the clashes may be brought to an end, and in order to ensure that all parties show restraint so that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) may be able to render the required relief and humanitarian assistance to all the victims and so that full material and moral support may be given to all the efforts of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

18. Egypt is aware that the reaching of a common understanding and a practical formula to ensure and strengthen Lebanon's sovereignty and independence and also to ensure the security, protection and welfare of the Palestinian refugees in the context of mutual trust between Lebanon and the PLO—the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people—is the key to ensuring stability, peace and security as well as mutual respect between all parties.

19. All the peoples of the world have expressed their determination to have their own entity by establishing States and thereby finding the means to protect their rights, welfare, stability and dignity—all peoples, that is, except the Palestinian people in the occupied territories

and in the Diaspora, in the camps in which they live. The only thing they have is the international conscience and the international community, the United Nations and the collective responsibility which we all share. Therefore the responsible step taken by the Council today, through the unanimous position it has taken, is clear evidence of the continued commitment of the United Nations to the search for a comprehensive and just settlement of the Palestinian question, in all its political and humanitarian aspects.

20. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Lebanon. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

21. Mr. FAKHOURY (Lebanon) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Since this is the first time that I have spoken in the Council under your presidency, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of that post—even though my congratulations are expressed to you on the last day of this month. Your very well-known experience has been amply and admirably demonstrated during the contacts and consultations.

22. I wish also to express to your predecessor, Mr. Arias Stella, the representative of Peru, our appreciation of the role he played during his presidency of the Council last month and of the ability and wisdom he showed in guiding the work of this Council.

23. It is with great pain that we Lebanese have been forced to take the position we are taking in the Council. It is as if the Council had forgotten the plight that has afflicted and continues to afflict our motherland, Lebanon. It is as if the Council had forgotten the sacrifices made by the Lebanese people and the tragedies which that people has endured for the past 10 years, and particularly the past seven years, as a result of its commitment to the Palestinian question and its protection of its Palestinian brothers residing on its territory. It was all of that which led Israel to invade Lebanon in 1978 and in 1982.

24. We are not recalling all that because we think that we did our Palestinian brothers a favour, or because we hope for words of thanks and appreciation. Indeed, we regard this commitment that we have undertaken as a national duty.

25. Nevertheless, against our will we have had to remind the Council of the words of senior Palestinian officials, who will testify that what we are saying is true. The bloody armed hostilities now taking place in our capital, Beirut—that is, on Lebanese soil—can cause no one more sorrow than the Lebanese themselves, and no one could work harder to end them than the Lebanese Government and people. Efforts to put an end to the clashes are continuing internally and regionally. We have great hope that those efforts will soon bear fruit.

26. In the past, we have made it clear in no uncertain terms that Lebanon opposes the Council dealing with the situation in and around the Palestinian camps, for the following reasons.

27. First, the Palestinian camps are located on Lebanese territory. Lebanon cannot possibly agree to give up its sovereignty over a single inch of its territory. We are confident that any other State in a similar situation would refuse to give up its sovereignty.

28. Secondly, the fact that the Council has been convened without Lebanon's consent to consider a situation in Lebanese territory constitutes blatant interference in Lebanon's internal affairs. We believe that the position we have taken would be taken by any State that might be faced in the future with the sort of situation confronting Lebanon today.

29. Thirdly, the convening of the Council in the manner in which it has been done today constitutes a dangerous precedent that could at any time, without its consent, affect any State in whose territory conflicts between local groups took place.

30. Fourthly, notwithstanding the fact that any State has the right to request the convening of the Council, it is taken for granted that the Council's mandate is confined to situations that threaten international peace and security. Thus it has no right to consider internal matters.

31. Fifthly, it is not useful for the Council to consider internal situations that are being dealt with on both the regional and the internal level. On the contrary, the Council must encourage all efforts in keeping with Article 52 of the Charter of the United Nations.

32. We regret that we have to place on record our opposition to the Council's meeting without our consent. We also oppose and reject any decision on a matter that we consider to be an internal matter—and that really is an internal matter.

33. In accordance with the instructions of my Government, I wish to place on record, and ask the Council to note, Lebanon's opposition to the Council having dealt with an internal Lebanese matter without Lebanon's consent. Naturally, it follows that we oppose any resolution adopted by the Council in this regard.

34. We regret even more deeply the fact that the Council has ignored the point of view of Lebanon, a founding Member of the United Nations, at a time when the United Nations is celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter, the aim of which is the consolidation of the principles of right, justice, equality and mutual respect.

35. Mr. de KÉMOULARIA (France) (*interpretation from French*): Once again the Council is meeting to consider the tragic situation in Beirut and in various other parts of Lebanon. Since 1975, the suffering people of that country have been subjected without respite to the most severe trials. In particular, the last three years have seen a grievous increase in the suffering of the civilian population.

36. We hardly need to recall that in the summer of 1982 the Israeli invasion and the spiralling violence it engendered

in southern Lebanon and then in Beirut caused the Council to meet on frequent occasions and to adopt a number of resolutions, including resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982), which we hope will soon be fully implemented. France hopes that the occupation of Lebanese territory by the Israeli army will soon come to an end.

37. Quite recently, on 24 May, the President of the Council, speaking on behalf of its entire membership, made a statement [*ibid.*] expressing our deep concern at the recrudescence of acts of violence in certain parts of Lebanon. That declaration followed a number of statements by the Secretary-General. On 12 April and 1 and 22 May, he expressed his deep concern at the fate of the civilian population, both Lebanese and Palestinian, in various parts of Lebanon such as southern Lebanon, the Saida area and the city of Beirut.

38. Because of the fine long-standing relations between France and the Lebanese people, the recent drastic intensification of the conflict that has been eroding Lebanon cannot leave us indifferent. These are of course domestic affairs on which the international community should not have to pass judgement. Nevertheless, in the light of the human tragedies stemming from the Lebanese conflict, the international community has, for humanitarian reasons, a particular responsibility which it cannot shirk. No one seated around this table can have forgotten the Council's debates at the time of the Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982. Today, once again, the victims are piling up inside and around those same camps.

39. I should also like to recall that the United Nations is directly involved in very important humanitarian activities relating to the civilian population of Lebanon. At Beirut and in the south, the members of the observer group at Beirut and of the observer group in Lebanon which are attached to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) are providing their assistance to the Lebanese authorities in order to alleviate the suffering of the population and to contribute to a reduction of violence. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which is the on-the-spot embodiment of the international community's concern for Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity, also received a humanitarian mandate in resolution 523 (1982). It is discharging that mandate under very difficult circumstances and with commendable devotion. Finally, everyone in this chamber must be aware that one of the most important activities of the United Nations in Lebanon, be it the financial contributions that have been made or the number of refugees concerned, is carried out by UNRWA. Indeed, its Commissioner-General is directly responsible to the Secretary-General.

40. Naturally, the United Nations obvious humanitarian responsibilities in Lebanon should not damage the sovereignty and authority of the Lebanese Government. France has shown that no one is more attached than it is to defending and restoring the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. It is precisely for that reason that my country understands the concerns expressed a few minutes ago by the representative of Lebanon and his concern to ensure respect for the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

41. When it comes to Lebanon and particularly to the suffering visited upon its people and its inhabitants, indifference is a feeling alien to France. Let me recall the profound emotion that the tragedies of these past weeks in southern Lebanon, in the region of Saida and in Beirut, have evoked in the French people and Government. Today, quite apart from the events that fully warrant our meeting, we must also think of what could happen tomorrow in certain settlements in the southern part of the country and in the Palestinian camps of Tyre and Saida.

42. In recent weeks, the French authorities have made several unambiguous statements on the subject. Thus, on 2 May, the Prime Minister, Laurent Fabius, expressed before the National Assembly "France's anguish at the situation in Lebanon and in particular that of the Christians". The Prime Minister went on to say clearly that "France is in total disagreement with the mass displacement of populations, which could have a lasting and detrimental effect on the unity of the country." On 29 May, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Roland Dumas, stated, referring to the situation in the camps of Sabra, Shatila and Burj Al-Barajneh, that the French Government shared the deep emotion that had been aroused by information about what had happened to the inhabitants of those camps. I myself, on instructions from my Government, was called upon to approach the Secretary-General on several occasions to express our feelings as well as to ask that the Organization, and particularly the Security Council, assume its responsibilities. For France, as our Minister for Foreign Affairs said at the Council of Ministers held last Wednesday, "It is urgent to put an end to the sufferings of the civilian population, Lebanese and Palestinian, Christian and Moslem, both in Beirut and in the south."

43. France cannot forget that it was itself sorely affected by the events taking place in Lebanon, whether in the framework of the multinational force which was placed at the service of the Lebanese Government or of its involvement in UNIFIL, to which it is the main contributor, or because of the white-helmeted observers requested by the Lebanese Government, a number of whom gave their lives in the search for peace in Lebanon. Our compatriots are also present in considerable numbers in Beirut as part of the UNTSO observer group. We recently had occasion to deplore the kidnapping of two diplomats, a university instructor and a journalist. The French Government is most concerned about those indescribable acts.

44. In such circumstances, it is fortunate, in our view, that the Security Council has just appealed for an immediate end to all acts of violence against the civilian populations of Lebanon, particularly in the Palestinian refugee camps, and for unrestricted freedom of movement for humanitarian and medical organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, such as UNRWA and the ICRC, whose role is not only to alleviate present suffering but also to promote respect for human rights—a funda-

mental requirement for individual security and public peace alike.

45. France also hopes that the Secretary-General will report forthwith on UNIFIL, describing the situation in Lebanon. Perhaps it might be a good idea if he were to visit Lebanon himself.

46. It is our fervent wish to see in Lebanon negotiations between all parties concerned—something we have constantly advocated—and a search for national consensus which will make it possible to re-establish the necessary conditions for a return to peace. France earnestly seeks the lasting peace which is more and more impatiently called for by all the people of the region, who have been so sorely tried by the events that have occurred over so many years.

47. Aware of the international implications of the situation, France is pleased by the adoption of this resolution, which attests to the determination of the Council and its concern fully to assume its responsibilities.

48. Mr. TROYANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): There is serious concern in the Soviet Union over the events at Beirut that have led to substantial material destruction and loss of life among the civilian population. A few days ago, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gromyko, at a meeting with a delegation from the League of Arab States, emphasized the need for an immediate halt to the bloodshed and conflict between the Arabs in Lebanon.

49. The Soviet delegation, proceeding from this humanitarian position, voted for the resolution which we have just adopted and which was submitted by the President of the Council.

50. At the same time, we cannot fail to take account of the position of the Government of Lebanon, which objected to the convening of an official meeting of the Council. That was just stated quite definitely by the representative of Lebanon. The Soviet delegation therefore regrets the fact that the position of the Lebanese Government was not duly taken into account by those who initiated the holding of today's meeting of the Council.

51. In conclusion, the Soviet delegation would like to emphasize that the situation in Lebanon is an integral part and a direct result of the Israeli occupation and the general continuing conflict in the Middle East. The key element of that conflict is the Palestinian problem. Events in Lebanon once again confirm the urgent need to attain a just and comprehensive Middle East settlement within the context of which the Palestinian people would be able to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and establish their own State. The Arabs would have returned to them all the lands seized from them, and all the countries and peoples of the region would finally obtain that long-awaited peace.

52. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Malta. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

53. Mr. GAUCI (Malta): It is precisely because of the tremendous bond of brotherly affection and solidarity that we feel for the people of Lebanon, whose ancestors molded our civilization thousands of years ago, and for the Palestinians living inside their camps, that we are compelled to trespass on the valuable time and the many concerns of the Council, and to add our own earnest voice in a heartfelt appeal to all to desist from further fighting, from which innocent civilians, including women and children, are suffering homelessness and even death. We fervently hope that the worst is over; we fervently hope that reconciliation will follow. We offer our deepest sympathy to the unfortunate victims and our readiness to assist in any humanitarian way within our modest means, with the consent of the Lebanese Government. We are close to Lebanon in many ways. In brief and in truth, we suffer mentally whenever they suffer physically.

54. We have spoken in the past on the general question of the hapless Palestinian people. Our position is on record in the statement I made before the Council on 30 August last year [*2553th meeting*] and in the statement of our Minister for Foreign Affairs in the General Assembly on 28 September.[1] I strongly reaffirm it today. Its validity today is perhaps only brought out more starkly by the current tragic events. We will continue to work assiduously to convince all concerned that an overdue solution, regrettably, can only be delayed at the expense of the chances for a lasting peace in the Middle East.

55. It only remains for me to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Council for having permitted me to speak today. I should also like to welcome the new permanent representatives of France and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and to congratulate the new members of the Council on their election.

56. I have already had the pleasure of extending my personal and official greetings to you when we exchanged notes only a few days ago on the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries, and it is therefore memorable for me to have made my first, and hopefully my last, intervention in the Council this year under your distinguished presidency, which has merited the admiration of all.

57. Mr. SORZANO (United States of America): Mr. President, as we approach not just the final day but the final hours of your presidency, my delegation would like to thank you and to congratulate you. It has been a very heavy month, and your responsibilities have been continuous. But it has also been a very constructive month, in that the Council took a number of actions in a very constructive spirit. The skill you displayed as President has had much to do with that outcome.

58. My delegation is pleased that the Council has been able to agree unanimously on a resolution in a timely fashion. The urgency of this tragic situation at Beirut demands no less of the Council. The Council and you deserve recognition for having assumed their proper responsibilities.

59. We share the anguish of most of the other Council members at the violence that has erupted anew in the Beirut area. We earnestly hope that all parties will exercise the utmost restraint and bring the fighting to an early and complete halt. The people of Lebanon deserve no less.

60. We welcome this new expression of concern by the Council and hope that its humanitarian calls will be heeded. In particular, we urge the parties involved to comply with the Council's call to facilitate the work of UNRWA, the ICRC and other organizations in providing immediate help to the suffering civilian population. We also join the other members of the Council in again reaffirming the need to honour the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. The Council has too long called in vain for respect for this key principle. We hope the day will soon come when it will be upheld throughout Lebanon.

61. The United States has made these and similar appeals in the past, and we make them again today. We have consistently urged for many years now that Lebanon's sovereignty be respected and that humanitarian attention be given to the civilian population. We have consistently urged that all foreign troops leave Lebanon and that the Lebanese be allowed to take steps to restore unity to their country.

62. In conclusion, I would hope that we do not discriminate among civilian victims of violence and that our expressions of grief go out equally for the victims of today as they did for the victims of yesterday. Beyond that, I would hope that we make equal efforts today to end the violence and suffering, as we have done on earlier occasions.

63. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

64. Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): Mr. President, at the outset let me thank you and the members of the Council for having invited the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, to take part in these deliberations. Sad as they are, they are of direct relationship and relevance to us.

65. Thailand has always unreservedly supported the Palestinian people in their plight and the need for them to exercise their inalienable rights in their own country, Palestine. Thailand has made it very clear that it supports the convening of an international peace conference to arrive at a just solution of the Palestine problem. We highly appreciate the wisdom and leadership that you have personally demonstrated, Sir.

66. While we deliberate and discuss here, the refugee camps hosting scores of thousands of Palestinians are being subjected to vindictive bombardment, shelling and burning. Atrocities are being committed with the clear aim of eliminating the Palestinian presence in the Beirut area and probably in the rest of Lebanon.

67. At this juncture, we recall the statement of the representative of the Government of the United States in this very chamber on 26 June 1982. In trying to justify his resort to the veto, he said:

> "the draft resolution, while containing many elements we support, fails to call for the essential requisite for the restoration of the authority of the Government of Lebanon, that is the elimination from Beirut and elsewhere of the presence of armed Palestinian elements who neither submit to nor respect the sovereign authority of the Lebanese Government" [*2381st meeting, para. 14*].

68. So it is very clear that the aim of the United States Government at that time, and that of the Israelis, who had invaded Lebanon, was to eliminate the Palestinian presence in Beirut and elsewhere. It is correct to assume that the whole exercise that is taking place now is designed to eliminate not only the armed elements but all Palestinians. And, as we all know, the elimination of human beings, regardless of their status and whether or not they are armed, is tantamount to an act of genocide.

69. Scores of thousands of Palestinians in the Beirut area and probably in the other Palestinian refugee camps in the rest of Lebanon are yet again without shelter. The latest information we have received is that 80 per cent of the Shatila refugee camp has been demolished, and bulldozers are still bulldozing houses, huts and tents in the Sabra refugee camp. So what the criminals failed to accomplish in September 1982 under the protection of the occupying Power, Israel, is being accomplished now—I cannot say with certainty under whose protection.

70. The immediate task before the Secretary-General and the United Nations, at least in our opinion, is to rebuild the destroyed houses and places of the Palestinian refugees on the sites where they have been forced to live for more than two decades. The task of the United Nations is not to abandon them and throw them into the wilderness. UNRWA has rebuilt some of the houses destroyed during the first Sabra and Shatila massacre, and we believe that the United Nations is under an obligation to rebuild those camps which have been destroyed again recently. I appeal to the members of the Council to authorize the Secretary-General and the other United Nations agencies to take immediate action to provide shelter for the Palestinian refugees on the sites where they have been forced to live for the past two decades or more.

71. We appreciate that the draft resolution has been unanimously approved and has become yet another resolution of the Council. In paragraph 3, it calls on all parties to take necessary measures to alleviate the suffering. In our opinion, the best way to alleviate the suffering is to enable those same people to go back to their homes and to live in peace once again, in accordance with their destiny, and to provide those camps with guarantees and assurances that they will not be attacked again. Their safety is the responsibility of the United Nations. This has already been admitted by the Secretary-General.

72. Concerning the appeal to all interested parties to co-operate with the Lebanese Government, I am authorized to say that the PLO extends the hand of brotherhood to Lebanon and that we shall work together for the welfare of the Palestinian and Lebanese people until such time as the Palestinians return to their homes in Palestine.

73. To take advantage of the present plight of our refugees in order to alter the demographic structure of the area would be immoral and inhuman and would serve the interests of the enemies of humanity and of peace in the area. The mass displacement of our people will only exacerbate the situation. What is happening around Beirut could encourage further action against other refugee camps in Lebanon.

74. Our men, women and children stood firm and held their ground. They were heroes in the struggle for survival and dignity, and they are determined to continue their struggle until they are able to return to their homes—from which they were displaced by force—to return and live in peace.

75. The PLO wishes to recall here that in January 1985 I addressed a letter to the President of the Council, which read, in part:

> "I am further requested to recall that on 19 September 1984, a letter was addressed to the Secretary-General by Chairman Arafat [*S/16749, annex*], in which he expressed grave concern regarding the outcome of such an Israeli move, particularly in the bitter memory of the Sabra and Shatila massacre of 17 September 1982. It should be recalled that the Secretary-General suggested a course of action which would make more effective the mandate of UNIFIL, specifically in southern Lebanon [*see S/16900, annex*].

76. What Chairman Arafat envisaged was not of the magnitude of what is happening now. What is happening now far exceeds our fears then. We still believe that the Council should have authorized the Secretary-General to deploy more concrete methods to prevent the recurrence of the crime of genocide. We still believe that the observer group at Beirut should have kept the Secretary-General apprised of the sad happenings in the area.

77. We know that the Lebanese Government and the PLO can reach an agreement, as we have done in the past. Our main concern now is the security and safety of the inhabitants, including those in the Palestinian refugee camps.

78. What is happening at Beirut is not strictly a domestic issue. It affects the fate of Palestinian refugees, whose safety and welfare are a historic responsibility of the United Nations, and we maintain and insist that that is why the Council is called upon to meet and to adopt the necessary measures to fulfil its functions and responsibilities.

79. The Israeli invasions were carried out in 1978 and 1982 not because the Palestinians were there but in pursuance of a policy of the Zionist movement and the Israeli Government. We are all aware of those records of Moshe Sharett and of those plans.

80. Finally, does the Security Council need to meet every now and then to discuss more tragedies and more tragic events, while the people suffer, or will the Council decide to take definite action? Such action has been proposed by the General Assembly—namely, to facilitate efforts and endeavours to implement those resolutions and to convene an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations in order to achieve peace in the region through a just solution to the question of Palestine, by enabling the Palestinian people to return to their homes in Palestine, where we shall exercise our right to self-determination freely and without external interference and establish our sovereign State in our own country.

81. At this juncture, I think that the Council should act to ensure a more global, more comprehensive approach.

82. Mr. WOOLCOTT (Australia): The Australian delegation would like to add its voice to those of other representatives who have rightly praised you, Sir, for your tactful, courteous and very skilful handling of the considerable and often complex work of the Council during this month of May.

83. The Australian Government believes that this urgent meeting of the Council is an appropriate response to the sombre and saddening situation produced by recent events in Lebanon. The events of the past few weeks in that country have been tragic, and indeed, have caused widespread loss of life and property. Faced with humanitarian problems of this magnitude, the Council, we believe, could not remain silent.

84. The tragic situation in Lebanon has caused particular grief in Australia because of the large number of people of Lebanese descent who have made their homes in Australia, but who none the less retain close and affectionate ties with their former homeland. In recent statements, the Australian Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs have emphasized my Government's deep concern over the recent events and fighting in Lebanon.

85. We have listened with the greatest sympathy and attention to the representative of Lebanon. We have noted with special sympathy his account of the grave situation confronting his country, and our hope is that the resolution just adopted, which explicitly calls for respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, will contribute to strengthening the hand of the Lebanese Government in dealing with its difficulties.

86. In formulating its approach to the situation in Lebanon, the Australian Government has been very conscious of respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Lebanon. Our approach has, therefore, concentrated on the humanitarian aspects of the situation.

87. It is the hope of the Australian Government that the resolution will attract respect and will be adhered to. Only

with the cessation of hostilities can there be progress towards removing the basic causes of violence in Lebanon. Only with the restoration of peace can Lebanese of all persuasions and creeds turn their attention towards reconstructing their country and securing a better way of life for themselves and for their children. That must, after the events of recent years, be the aspiration of all Lebanese, and indeed of all of us.

88. We voted in favour of the resolution in the hope that it will assist in that process.

89. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the Council that I have just received a letter from the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite him to participate in the discussion without the right to vote in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.

It was so decided.

90. The PRESIDENT: I invite the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

91. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank you for calling on me, Sir, and I congratulate you on completing your period as President of the Council so successfully and on having been able to contact all delegations that have anything to do with the subject under consideration.

92. The Syrian Arab Republic supports the position taken by the Lebanese Government and explained by its representative, Mr. Fakhoury, some time ago. We regret that the Council has failed to abide by the will of Lebanon, expressed by Mr. Fakhoury before the meeting and during the meeting. We regard the Egyptian request for a meeting of the Council as a manoeuvre clearly motivated by political considerations that are no secret to anyone. The most important motive is to divert attention from the surrender agreements imposed by Washington, from Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories and from the fact that Israel is trying to perpetuate its occupation of the Arab territories, persecuting the Arabs in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon.

93. The resolution just adopted will not help Lebanon. If the Council really wants to maintain the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon, it will find that the resolution will do exactly the opposite. It may even lead to the escalation of the fighting in the camps, which has coincided with certain recent activities and close contacts between Washington and certain capitals in our region.

94. The consideration by the Council of an internal Lebanese question is interference in the affairs of a sovereign, independent State which finds itself in difficulty because of Israeli invasion and aggression and the policy of hegemony pursued by the United States in the area and because of this aggression against the Arab nation—aggression coupled with conspiracy against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples.

95. In the light of Lebanon's objection, the convening of this meeting of the Council is in direct contravention of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations, because the Council is meeting against the will of a country which is capable of settling its internal disputes, and particularly in view of the fact that all the parties are convinced of the need for co-operation and reconciliation. Also, the Council has convened a meeting without taking note of the sincere efforts made by the Syrian Arab Republic to conclude an agreement and restore stability and security to fraternal Lebanon. This was made very clear in the summit meeting between Lebanon and Syria which took place during the past two days at Damascus.

96. The Egyptian move is not in the Council's interest, it is not in Lebanon's interest, nor is it in the Palestinian people's interest. It aims at thwarting the efforts of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments to restore peace and security to fraternal Lebanon, since Egypt has tried to internationalize an internal Lebanese problem. In so doing, the Egyptian delegation seeks to sow more seeds of discord among the Arab ranks—in Israel's interest of course—and to embarrass the Arabs in diplomatic circles and undermine their issues in international forums, to the detriment of the Palestinian question. This runs counter to our demand that Israel should withdraw completely and unconditionally from all the occupied Arab territories. Those Egyptian manoeuvres will deceive nobody. The Syrian Arab Republic will stand firm against Israel and all its allies in all international forums and on all matters.

97. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I should like to say only a few words and I shall not add anything new. I thank the Council again and express my satisfaction and that of the Egyptian delegation at the fact that the resolution was adopted unanimously.

98. The PRESIDENT: The Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.

NOTE

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 13th meeting.

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90-61439—June 1994—1,925